ĀMAN

KYOTO

Experience Guide

Experiences at Aman Kyoto

What makes a hotel is more than its rooms and walls, but the experience outside, its connection to its environment and its deep-rooted links to local culture. As with all Aman hotels, Aman Kyoto's immersive activities are all part of how we hope to connect you to the world beyond your window.

On our doorstep is Japan's cultural capital – home to 17 UNESCO sites –, as well as the chance to try forest bathing in our secret garden setting, sketching with a local artist, a traditional tea ceremony and even a private temple experience.

Some experiences require planning in advance, so please discuss your interests with our team to allow us to assist with arrangements. As all the activities are reserved exclusively for our guests, we kindly ask for advance notice.

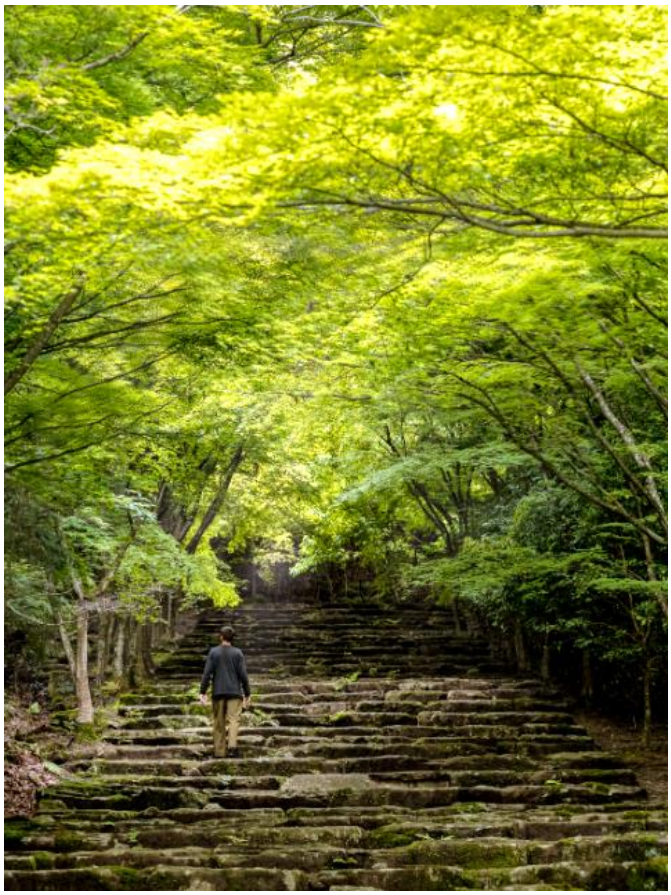
We look forward to making your stay memorable.

Warm regards,

Your Aman Kyoto Family

Activities & Experiences

Set in a secret garden at the heart of a forest, Aman Kyoto lies at the foot of Mount Hidari Daimonji, a stone's throw from Kyoto's golden Kinkaku-ji temple and its 16 other UNESCO World Heritage Sites. An ideal base for exploring the ancient capital's many attractions, Aman Kyoto is nonetheless a secluded world apart, where winding footpaths link tranquil forest glades ripe for exploration. Aman Kyoto has crafted a range of unique experiences revealing the property's natural beauty and providing insight into Japan's rich cultural heritage. Fun for the whole family, these activities can be tailored to individual preferences.



Complimentary Activities

Secret Garden Exploring

Discover the most beguiling corners of our enchanted forest on a guided walk. As the seasons change, so too does our garden, ensuring that no two walks are ever the same.

The activity lasts around 30-60 minutes. Discover the full schedule of dates and times in our activity calendar.

Origami Art

Origami is a traditional Japanese art of folding a single sheet of paper into three-dimensional forms. The joy of watching the paper transform in your hands nurtures creativity and has been cherished across generations. Inspired by the nature and creatures of the resort's secret garden, enjoy folding shapes such as birds, flowers and kimono while taking part in a timeless cultural ritual.

The activity lasts around 30-60 minutes. Discover the full schedule of dates and times in our activity calendar.

Leaf & Acorn Crafts

There are so many unique leaves and acorns in our beautiful garden. Find your favourites, then make original crafts with coloured paper provided.

The activity last around 60 minutes. Discover the full schedule of dates and times in our activity calendar.

Complimentary Activities

Morning Yoga

Breathe in the forest air and let your heart and mind become light. Start your day with morning yoga sessions to ground and reinvigorate, surrounded by the tranquil beauty of nature.

The activity lasts 60 minutes. Discover the full schedule of dates and times in our activity calendar.

A Moment of Matcha

Step into a serene tearoom where the timeless elegance of Japanese tradition comes to life. Savour earthy matcha, trying your hand at preparation, should you wish, accompanied delicate seasonal confections as the subtle fragrance of tea envelops — each bowl offering a moment of serenity away from the everyday.

The activity lasts around 15-30 minutes. Discover the full schedule of dates and times in our activity calendar.

On-site Experiences

Discover Chanoyu - A Mindful Tea Ritual

At our teahouse, Senkutsu, the beauty and spirit of Japan is celebrated wholeheartedly through an immersive tea ceremony led by a master practitioner. Here, seasonal scrolls and floral arrangements, the gentle rise of steam from the kettle and the interplay of light and shadow through shoji screens come together to create a serene and sensory experience. Step into the intimate four-and-a-half-mat room, an intimate space that transcends its size, where profound stillness and depth envelop and a single bowl of tea guides you into a place of quiet elegance, offering a mindful, contemplative moment like no other.

Tea Ceremony
Available at 11am or 12.30pm.
The experience lasts around 45-60 minutes.

Tea Ceremony with Lunch
Available at 12.30pm.
The experience lasts around 90-120 minutes.

Closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Exclusively for guests aged 12 and above and designed to accommodate up to four guests. Guests are required to book at least seven days in advance.

Colour Your Journey

Join a local Japanese artist and recreate a scene from Aman Kyoto's once-forgotten secret garden during this outdoor art lesson. You'll also learn about traditional Japanese stencilling techniques to make your own set of keepsake postcards.

The activity last around 90-120 minutes.

This outdoor experience takes place between 9.30am and 2pm (weather and temperature dependent) and is available year-round. Please book at least three days in advance.

Bonkei Garden Experience

Bonkei is the art of creating miniature gardens and landscapes. In general, Japanese gardens are an arrangement of wood, stone, moss, soil and waterscapes. Engage in this art form by joining one of our expert gardeners. During the experience, you can touch the moss, soil and stone to create your own unique potted garden.

The activity lasts around 60 minutes.

This outdoor experience takes place between 9.30am and 4pm (weather and temperature dependent) and is available year-round. Pots cannot be taken away. Please book at least three days in advance.

Wagashi Sweet Making & Matcha Tasting

The perfect accompaniment to *matcha* green tea, *wagashi* are Japanese sweets renowned for their delicacy and variety in appearance, often created to depict the four seasons. We invite you to create your own sweet masterpiece in this hands-on workshop.

The activity lasts around 60 minutes.

Starting time 9.30am, 3pm or 3.30pm. Unavailable on Wednesdays. Please book at least three days in advance.

Tsumami-Zaiku Crafts (Pinching Crafts)

Dating back over two centuries, *tsumami-zaiku* is a traditional Japanese craft often used to create hair accessories. The practice involves making intricate, floral objects by arranging small, colourful fabric shapes onto a base. Guided by a *tsumami-zaiku* artisan, try your hand at this ancient art using the finest silk cloth dyed by local craftsmen.

The activity lasts around 60 minutes.

Starting time 3pm or 3.30pm. Available on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursday and Fridays (excluding public holidays). Suitable for guests aged 10 and over. Contact us for a similar experience designed for guests aged between five and nine. Please book at least three days in advance.

Sushi Making

Try your hand at creating sushi rolls and temari sushi using the finest fresh ingredients such as tuna, salmon and shrimp. Under the expert guidance of Taka-An's chef, who will demonstrate and share tips, you will learn how to recreate these culinary masterpieces at home. Conclude the 60-minute session by enjoying your handcrafted sushi with warm tea at a table in Taka-An.

The activity lasts around 60 minutus. Start from 3.30pm. Please book at least three days in advance.

Ancient City by Bicycle

Guided Cycling Tour

Venture beyond our garden on a personalised bicycle or e-bike tour and take in the history and culture of this ancient capital. Let us know your interests and we will tailor a route specially for you.

The activity lasts up to four hours, starting between 8am and 2pm.

Rental Bikes

Electric bikes are available for rent from 8am to 6 pm.

Please note that for both the guided cycling tour and bike rentals, a minimum height of 144cm (4ft 7in) is required, due to the size of the e-bike. Due to the limited number of bicycles, please inform us by 5pm one day prior for reservations, changes or cancellations.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites

For eleven centuries, from 794 until 1869, Kyoto served as the capital of Japan. Today, it is considered the cultural capital of Japan with 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and countless temples and shrines to explore, including the nearby golden temple of Kinkaku-ji. As tempting as it is to enjoy our secret garden and Aman Spa, this ancient city is full of cultural experiences to explore. The Aman Kyoto team can assist with creating personalised itineraries with professional guides or advising on your own self-guided excursion

Kyoto has one of the world's largest collections of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We recommend spending about five to six hours with a car in order to visit four of these sites.

Golden Pavilion (officially Rokuon-ji Temple) is located about five minutes by car from Aman Kyoto. With an exterior covered in golden leaf, a pond and a traditional Japanese strolling garden, it is an excellent example of a Muromachi-period garden design.

Close by, is a second temple renowned for its exceptional Zen Garden. Once the home of an aristocrat, **Ryoan-ji** was converted into a temple in 1450. It is now best known for its exquisite dry landscape garden with no trees or shrubs. There are 15 rocks of various sizes placed harmoniously on a carefully raked bed of white gravel.

Next, visit **Ninna-ji Temple.** This is the head temple of the Omuro School of the Shingon sect of Buddhism and was established in 888. Members of the Imperial Family used to serve as the head priest and the temple was also known as Omuro Imperial Palace.

The last stop of the day is to one of the oldest shrines in Kyoto. **Kamigamo Shrine** is dedicated to the God of thunder and rain and was founded 100 years before Kyoto was born.

Neighbourhood Stroll

If you would like to enjoy the fresh forest air, why not enjoy a short stroll around the mountains and visit some of the local shrines.

A 20-minute walk leads to a temple named after one of the most sophisticated people in the 16th century. **Koetsu-ji Temple** was named after Koetsu Honami, a master of several Japanese arts and his interest in the tea ceremony is reflected in the layout of this temple.

Close by is **Josho-ji Temple,** founded in 1616 and associated with the Edo-period courtesan, Yoshinodayu. Her proficiency in poetry, *ikebana* flower arrangement and music made her one of the most famous courtesans. Josho-ji is particularly well known for its cherry blossoms in spring.

Cultural Journey

For 1,200 years, Kyoto flourished as Japan’s capital since Emperor Kanmu established the city, then known as 'Heian-kyo' in 794. Rich history and tradition have shaped Kyoto into the revered city it is today, celebrated for its ever-changing natural beauty across the seasons. With shrines dating back almost 1,400 years and temples founded by influential figures, Kyoto’s history is entwined with Japan’s own story. Within this historical tapestry, a culture known as *ichigen-san okotowari* (invitation only) thrives, reserving exclusivity for longstanding patrons in centuries-old establishments and entertainment districts. Aman Kyoto offers access to these unique institutions through its Aman Journeys itineraries, which help unlock usually inaccessible temples and locations, exclusively for our guests. As these journeys are in high demand, reservations in advance are highly recommended. Please note that full cancellation fees apply.

Private Zen Meditation

Enjoy tranquillity and achieve a clear state of mind with a visit to a private temple that is otherwise inaccessible to the public. Sitting on the traditional *tatami*-mat floors in an ancient hall, a Buddhist monk will share the principles of meditation, dispelling some common misassumptions, while encouraging you to find your inner peace. During this morning excursion, you will explore the temple's magnificent Japanese garden.

The experience lasts approximately 60 minutes.

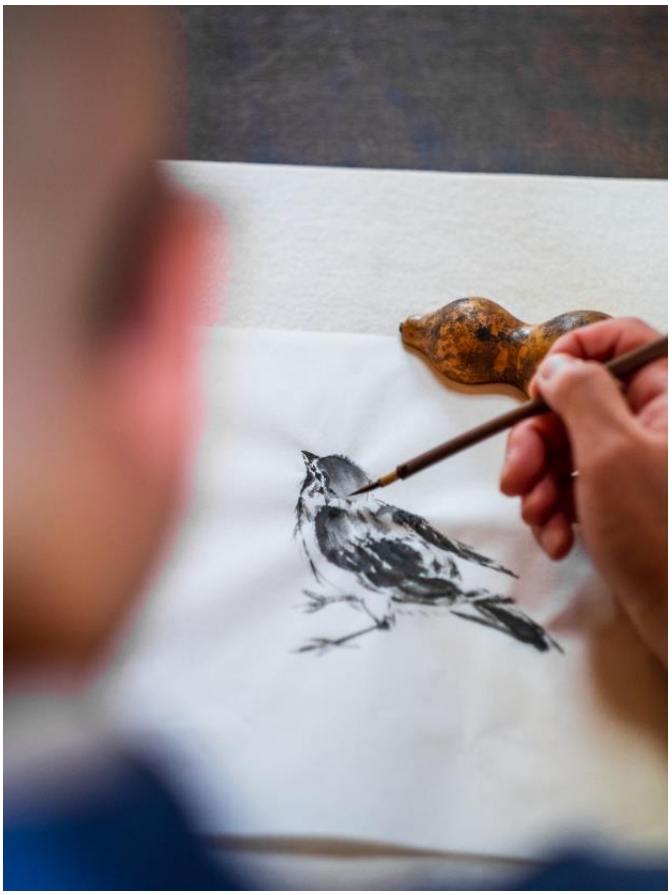
Experience includes return transportation to the temple and a personal guide. Please book ten days in advance.

Private Ikebana Flower Arrangement

Plants play a crucial role in the Shinto religion and the arranging of flowers is known as *ikebana* (giving life to flowers) or *kado* (way of flowers). *Ikebana* aims to bring out the inner qualities of flowers and express emotion. It has always been considered a dignified art and is believed to aid in refreshing the body and restoring the spirit. Each piece represents a part of humanity, life and time. As *ikebana* displays can be commonly found in temples and shrines, we believe that the best way to learn this refined art is to visit a special temple with an exclusive space.

The experience lasts approximately 60-90 minutes.

Includes return transportation to the venue. Please book ten days in advance.



Private Calligraphy Lesson

Shodo (calligraphy) is an ancient art form that was born from Chinese culture. The principles and techniques are similar but have evolved in its current form throughout centuries. As writing was once the only way to keep records, *shodo* was an essential communication skill and believed to have an inseparable connection with Zen thoughts. No corrections can be made, so there is only one chance in every stroke. The artwork varies greatly depending on its author, reflecting their personality and state of mind. To learn this charming art, you will visit a private temple that can only be accessed by our guests.

The experience takes approximately 60 minutes.

Includes return transportation to the temple and a personal guide. Please book ten days in advance.

Private Ink-Painting Lesson

Japanese ink painting, also known as *sumi-e*, is a type of East Asian brush painting. It flourished in China thousands of years ago and was introduced to Japan by Zen Buddhist monks. Using just simple black ink and a carefully curated white canvas, *sumi-e* captures the timeless beauty and complexity of the natural world. We are delighted to offer this hands-on experience, which also helps to focus and purify the mind.

The experience takes approximately 60 minutes.

Includes return transportation to the temple and a personal guide. Please book ten days in advance.

An Encounter with Maiko & Geiko

An *ochaya* (tea house) is an establishment where guests are entertained by a Maiko or Geiko (known as geisha outside of Kyoto). Though known as a tea house, an *ochaya* does not normally serve tea or perform tea ceremonies. *Ochaya* are extremely discreet and exclusive establishments and visiting without an invitiation and reservation is a serious breach of manners. This outstanding and memorable Aman experience will be held at an *ochaya* in one of Kyoto's five Geiko districts. It includes watching a traditional dancing performance, engaging in light conversation and playing the traditional *ozashiki* (tea house party) game.

The experience lasts approximately 60 minutes.

Includes return transportation to the house. Please book ten days in advance.

Buddhist Cooking Class

Shojin ryori is a vegan Buddhist cuisine. Buddhist beliefs discourage harming animals, so animals and their byproducts are not consumed. Pungent flavours such as garlic or onion are also avoided. *Shojin ryori* follows the 'rule of five', where every meal must contain five colours (green, yellow, red, black and white) and provide five flavours (sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami). Bring balance to your body and find Zen in your mind through this cooking class, before enjoying the plant-based cuisine of Buddhist monks.

The experience lasts approximately 150 minutes.

Includes Buddhist cuisine and return transportation to the venue. Please book ten days in advance

Private Tea Farm Visit at Uji

The ideal climate for tea cultivation can be found in nearby Uji, where river fog and temperate weather have led to the region becoming one of Japan's leading tea production areas. A culture unique to Japan, guests are invited to visit a tea plantation renowned for growing the finest Uji tea, where tea has been hand-picked for six generations, alongside learning about the Honzu cultivation method that has been practiced in Uji for over 400 years. Following the plantation tour, embark on a journey of taste and aroma with an Uji tea tasting for an in-depth discovery into the region's unique cultivation.

The experience lasts approximately 90 minutes.

Transportation is not included but can be arranged separately. The journey takes approximately 60 minutes each way. This experience is unavailable during harvesting season. Please book ten days in advance.

Refunds are not applicable for cancellations made within 72 hours of booked on-site activities.

For the Cultural Journey, once the booking is confirmed, we are unable to accommodate changes to the timing or cancellations of reservations, as this aligns with the Kyoto etiquette. Full pre-payment and cancellation fees apply. We respectfully request that you confirm the date and fee before initiating any enquiry.

For further information or reservations, please contact Aman Kyoto's activity team at amankyoto@aman.com.

We will be delighted to assist you.

From all of us at Aman Kyoto, we wish you a happy and peaceful stay.

AMAN KYOTO

Aman Kyoto

1 Okitayama Washimine-cho Kita-ku 603-8458 Kyoto, Japan

Tel: +81 75 496 1333

Email: amankyoto@aman.com

amankyoto.com

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aman.com